

**DELMARVA
LAND AND LITTER
COLLABORATIVE**

**Strategic Roadmap
2026-2029**

Vision

Farming and poultry production on Delmarva are economically viable, environmentally sound and can serve as a national model.

Mission

Delmarva Land and Litter Collaborative builds trusting cross-sector relationships through shared learning and dialogue about science-based solutions in order to catalyze collective action for profitable chicken and grain farming and healthy land and water on the Delmarva Peninsula.

Value Statement

DLLC members act with integrity, open-mindedness, and transparency to achieve our common vision.

Strategies

- Convene forums for stakeholders and decision-makers across Delmarva to collaborate, share information, and implement creative solutions that achieve the DLLC mission.
- Listen to and learn from farmers, scientists, agricultural advisors, and stakeholders to inform viable solutions.
- Distill what we learn into credible science-based solutions and nurture their implementation.
- Share what we have learned with decision-makers and the public about issues at the intersection of farming and the environment.
- Sustain the collaborative by leveraging and diversifying resources to implement solutions and support the organization.

Priorities

1. Expand communication to support meaningful cross-sectoral dialogue.

Problem(s) Identification: Communication among stakeholder communities can be siloed, creating echo chambers on cross-sectoral issues. There is a high priority for DLLC members to share the knowledge and trust they have built within the DLLC to others. DLLC members can equip each other with key, consistent messaging that they can use to communicate DLLC priorities externally. Setting the expectation that DLLC members should play this role can expand trust and meaningful dialogue across the sectors represented within the DLLC.

Desired Outcomes:

- DLLC members participate in events or meetings on a quarterly basis to promote the DLLC cross sectoral collaborative approach.
- DLLC members serve as liaisons for collaboration within their own networks.
- A vibrant website, newsletter, social media presence and storyboard provide the latest science-based solutions, information, and implementation options for a cross-sector approach.
- Key messaging is developed and shared by members to promote the continuous improvement and progress of DLLC on water quality and conservation partnerships, and highlights farmer/landowner success stories.

- Increased visibility to local, state and federal decision-makers that promote DLLC as a resource for information at the intersection of environment and agriculture.
- DLLC utilizes its farmer connections to facilitate input to groups providing financial and technical assistance for conservation.

2. Promote a whole-system watershed approach on Delmarva that supports and recognizes practices on agricultural lands.

Problem(s) Identification: Watersheds do not have the same buffering capacity they used to, and the Delmarva has lost a lot of wetlands and forests that would have acted as water filters. With more extreme storms, increasing inputs, changes in hydrology, lack of collaboration, and conflicting interests, the resiliency of watersheds continues to decline. This places an undue burden on farmers to accommodate for landscape-level changes. DLLC should position itself to promote a whole system approach to local watershed restoration on Delmarva and to ensure that the agricultural sector receives credit for their conservation practices, and has the tools it needs to reduce nutrient runoff overall.

Desired Outcomes:

- Increase DLLC members' understanding of how a whole-system approach to watershed conservation can best provide water quality improvement in Delmarva streams and rivers.
- More farmers are engaged to help members improve their understanding of ag conservation implementation concerns and needs and what role DLLC can play in engaging/supporting the agricultural community.
- DLLC members and others are supported in seeking funding that assists Delmarva farmers with conservation implementation.
- Stakeholder communities have increased awareness of quantifiable successes and positive stories of efforts on local Delmarva watersheds.
- DLLC actively engages with regional partners who have proven results connecting with landowners, producers, and farmers at the local watershed level.
- More DLLC members enter conservation / ag industry partnerships to improve funding competitiveness and cross-sector support for watershed improvements.
- DLLC members advocate for consistent and accessible funding that sustains meaningful results for conservation on Delmarva.

3. Explore and support emerging conservation strategies and practices that increase nutrient management on agricultural land.

Problem(s) Identification: Climate, water, and biodiversity considerations all must make economic sense on a farm before a strategy is formed, a practice adopted, or a new technology is utilized. Before supporting such a strategy, practice, or technology, DLLC members must thoroughly explore emerging options that can move the needle on nutrient management.

Desired Outcomes:

- Technologies that make economic sense on a farm and can move the needle on nutrient management and water quality are vetted and supported by DLLC.
- Increased implementation of conservation practices involving chicken houses, farm fields, and waterways on Delmarva (examples include conservation drainage and buffers).

- Increased understanding of soil phosphorus remediation process that can be made available to farmers who cannot use chicken litter as fertilizer because of high phosphorus levels.
- Increase understanding of, and barriers to nutrient use efficiency technology, soil phosphorus remediation, bioremediation, and other innovative solutions.

4. Understand emerging market-based opportunities and how they can directly benefit farmers.

Problem(s) Identification: As emerging market-based opportunities become available for agriculture (e.g., supply chain sustainability initiatives, climate-smart commodities, ecosystem service market, etc.), there is a need to understand how these opportunities function and how farmers can directly benefit. DLLC members do not currently have enough information on this topic and would like to expand their knowledge by engaging with each other and experts.

Desired Outcome:

- DLLC members learn about poultry and grain producers' sustainability goals on Delmarva.
- DLLC members learn how supply chain sustainability initiatives, climate-smart commodities, ecosystem service market, etc. function.
- DLLC members gain understanding of how these opportunities can benefit the farmers.
- DLLC makes this information available to stakeholder communities.

5. Expand the diversity and sustainability of DLLC.

Problem(s) Identification: To be effective, DLLC recognizes the need for internal processes that keep us focused on strategic priorities, while also cultivating collaborative members and partners to carry out the work.

Desired Outcomes:

- Networks of connections are expanded across Delmarva.
- More engagement methods are utilized to increase diversity of members and stakeholder input.
- All operations are aligned with DLLC's mission and strategic plan.
- The long-term Sustainability Plan is integrated in DLLC's business.
- Engagement with funders is increased to expand awareness and appreciation of the DLLC.